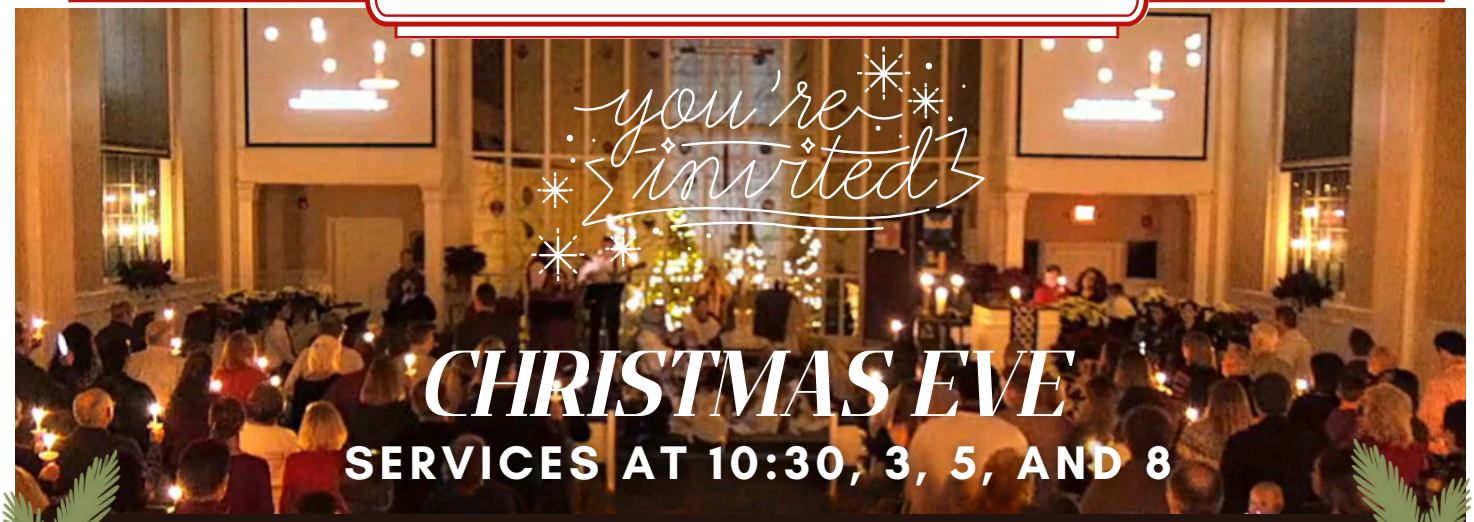
BRECKSVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 65 PUBLIC SQUARE, BVILLE OHIO

@BrecksvilleUMC

THE GOOD WORD

December 2026



you're invited

CHRISTMAS EVE

SERVICES AT 10:30, 3, 5, AND 8

10:30 am - Joyful Morning Carols & Candles

3 pm - Traditional Service with Organ

5 pm - Christmas Pageant with Worship Band

8 pm - Carols & Candlelight
with Choir and a String Quartet

All services include Silent Night and Candle Lighting

Christmas Extravaganza

Saturday, December 20 | 9:30–10:30 a.m.
Fellowship Hall

'Twas the Morning of the Extravaganza...
'Twas the morning of Christmas fun,
And there was plenty for everyone!
With crafts to make and games to play,
We'll celebrate the season the BUMC way.
So bring the children, young and old,
For an hour of merriment,
laughter, and gold
(Well, maybe not gold, but glitter and glue!)
There's plenty of Christmas fun
waiting for you!

Everyone's welcome! Bring your friends!

CHRISTMAS CANTATA

Follow the Light this Christmas.

From hope and peace to wonder and joy, experience Joseph M. Martin's Christmas cantata, *The Star Arising*. Featuring the Brecksville UMC Chancel Choir, beloved carol melodies, and moving scripture narration, this special worship service celebrates the arrival of the Light of the World.

Sunday, December 20 at 10:30 am

Sanctuary, Brecksville United Methodist Church

ONE WORSHIP SERVICE ON THIS DATE!

Brecksville UMC
440-526-8938
office@brecksvilleumc.com
65 Public Square, 44141
www.brecksvilleumc.com

Daylight Savings Did a Number On Me



Daylight Savings did a number on me this year.

The sun sets by 6:00, and with it, my desire to do anything productive. I want to settle in with a blanket and a book, or watch a movie while cuddling a dog and a kid.

In the natural world, winter is a time of retreat and hibernation. After the growth of summer and harvest of autumn, winter is a time to rest from productivity and live at a slower pace. But (as I've had to remind myself in years past) slower doesn't mean stopping. There are still things that need doing—household chores and evening meetings, encouraging, supporting, and caring for others.

So as the sun sets earlier, I've made a point to turn on lamps, light candles, and string fairy lights throughout my house. These small acts don't get rid of the darkness, but they remind me that darkness isn't all there is.

As we move towards Christmas, we enter the Church season of Advent. It's a time of active waiting—for the Christ Child to be born, and for God's kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven. We know the world is not as it should be. There's too much violence, and division, and loneliness, and suffering. We long for a world shaped by God's peace, compassion, justice, and love—for Christ to be present in ways that make a difference in our lives and in the world around us.

This year, our Advent series, *Until the Dawn*, invites us to move toward the light—to cry out, start somewhere, speak up, take courage, build up, and choose joy. We are reminded that even in the darkness, there's work to do, and God meets us in the middle of it.

That's what our vision—**to saturate our community with connection and belonging… on the Square and everywhere**—is all about. We want to be part of bringing light into the places where people feel isolated, overlooked, disconnected, or alone.

Until the dawning of God's kingdom, we commit to creating glimmers of God's light through the ways we create spaces where people are welcomed, relationships where people are known, and communities where people discover they don't have to walk through the difficult seasons alone.

We get to be a lamp, or candle, or string of lights in the darkness, reminding the world that darkness isn't all there is.

The dawn is coming. And until it comes, we have work to do. This Advent, may we continue to carry the Light of Christ into the world, together.

Pastor Heidi

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Published monthly by
Brecksville United Methodist Church
65 Public Square, Brecksville, OH 44141

Submission deadline
3rd Wednesday monthly
Editor, Melanie Smith
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A Quiet Place in the Season: Advent Sound Baths

Sundays, November 29–December 20 | 9:30–10:20 a.m. | Chapel

Advent can be a busy season, full of preparations, celebrations, and to-do lists. In the midst of it all, we can make a little room to simply be. Join Jenny and Erin Sunday mornings during Advent for a time of quiet, meditation, and prayer, accompanied by the soothing tones of our sound bowls. Each gathering will offer a guided meditation and a chance to rest, listen, and settle into the season in a different way. Whether you're familiar with sound baths or simply curious, you're welcome to come as you are. No experience or special preparation is needed—just bring yourself and a willingness to pause. A yoga mat, pillow, and blanket may help you settle in and get comfortable. ***Give yourself the gift of a little stillness this Advent.***

Art & Faith

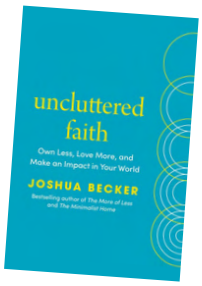
Mark Your Calendars: *Sundays starting January 3, 2027 | 9:30 in the Chapel*

Can a painting become a prayer? Can a piece of art open up a new way of seeing God? What might we discover when we look at faith through the eyes of an artist? Join Michael Jaszczak in the new year for an interactive exploration of the connections between art and faith. We'll look closely, share observations, ask questions, and discover how creativity can open doors to new ways of thinking, seeing, and experiencing the sacred. No art experience necessary. Bring your curiosity and a willingness to see things a differently!

Save the Date:

Uncluttered Faith

Sunday mornings starting January 3 at 9:30 am



What if having less could actually help us experience more? Join Stefanie Zaranec and friends in the new year as we read and explore *Uncluttered Faith* by Joshua Becker and consider what Jesus teaches us about our relationship with possessions, generosity, and the things that matter most. Join us on Sunday mornings for a fresh look at how living with less can make room for more faith, deeper relationships, and a more meaningful life.

Imaginative Prayer: A Story to Step Into

Mondays at 10:30 in the Chapel (first Monday each month at Chippewa Place)

This December, we continue our practice of Imaginative Prayer, entering a Bible story through our imagination and allowing its words and people to come alive in new ways. There is something special about being able to hold these ancient stories in our hands, read their words, and discover that they still have something to offer us today. We're grateful for the stories, the space to wonder, and the moments when a familiar passage opens up in a new way. *Drop in anytime!*

Older Doesn't Mean Over

Healthy Bodies. Faithful Lives. Vital Churches

Thursdays, January 7 – February 4, 2027, 10:00–11:30 a.m. Online via Zoom

Our bodies change as we age—but aging isn't the same as dying, and health isn't the same as youth. Too often, we approach growing older through the lens of decline and limitations. This January, the Office of Discipleship Ministries and the Office of Leadership Wellness & Renewal invite you to a five-week Zoom experience built around a different conviction: age alone does not determine our physical health, our value, or our calling.

As we learn how our bodies can remain healthy, adapt, and grow stronger with age, we'll explore how those same lessons strengthen our discipleship and our congregations. Using five anchors for healthy living—**Eat Real Food, Move Your Body, Get Adequate Sleep, Manage Your Stress, and Stay Relationally Connected**—each session delivers practical health education alongside spiritual reflection. You'll leave with actionable ways to care for your body, fresh possibilities for ministry, and one faithful step to practice during Lent.

Who Should Attend? Clergy and laity of all ages are welcome—whether you want to age well physically, deepen your discipleship, or help your church thrive in its current season. Scan the QR code to register, or visit BUMCLinks.com

Lifelong Learning for Kids

Children Needed for Christmas Eve!

One of our favorite Christmas traditions at BUMC is having children help bring the Christmas story to life on Christmas Eve! We'd love to have our BUMC kids be part of the celebration this year, and there are opportunities for readers and actors of all ages.

For our 10:30 a.m. Christmas Eve service, we're looking for children to serve as story readers and we need non-reading actors who will help bring the story to life.

For our 5:00 p.m. Family Christmas Eve service, we're looking for readers as well as children to take on the roles of angels, shepherds, sheep, and wise ones! Yep, you both read and play a part. There will be one group practice during the week leading up to Christmas Eve, so everyone has a chance to get comfortable with their part.

Whether your child loves being in the spotlight or would rather be part of the action without speaking, there's a place for them!

Please let us know if your child would like to participate. Email jenny@brecksvilleumc.com We can't wait to share this special Christmas tradition with our BUMC families!

Christmas Chimes Are Back!

One of our sweetest Christmas Eve traditions is making music together! BUMC children are invited to join our Christmas Chimes group as we learn a special Christmas piece to share with the congregation on Christmas Eve.

With the help of some talented grown ups, we'll spend some time learning to play the chimes, read the music and make a little Christmas music magic. No previous chime experience is needed!

Our young musicians will share what they've learned during the 5 pm Christmas Eve celebration. Come be part of the music! Practices will be held on Sundays during the 10:30 hour (during Sprouts).



A Christmas Story in Sprouts

Grades 1–6. After Children's Moment in the 10:30 Worship Service.

December is bringing a little extra Christmas excitement to Sprouts! During the first two Sundays of the month, we'll be exploring the Christmas story through hands-on activities, experiments, games, and creative discoveries. We'll follow the story as it unfolds, finding fun ways to experience some of the people, places, and surprises that make the Christmas story so special.

Then, on December 20 and 27, Sprouts and Seedlings will join together for some all-ages Christmas fun! We'll keep the Christmas spirit going as our younger and older friends gather to celebrate the season together. It's going to be a fun-filled December, and we look forward to sharing it with our BUMC kids!



Sunday mornings at 9:30 in the Parlor
A space for kids to explore ways to be in service with others

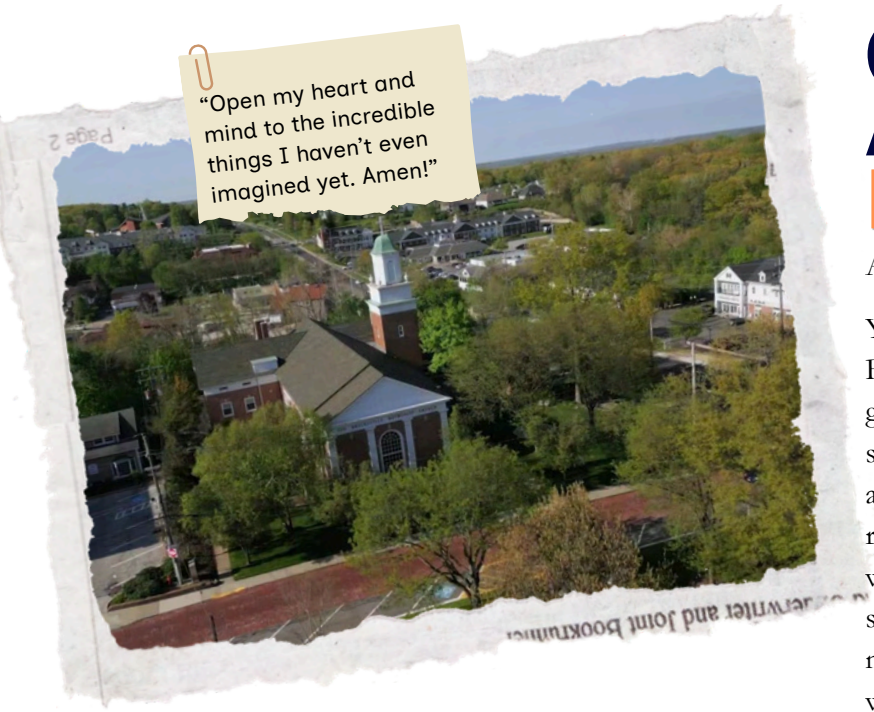
On December 6 and 13, our Do Something Sunday kids will be busy spreading a little Christmas joy! We'll be putting together Christmas gift bags for our neighbors at Nehemiah Mission and finishing thank-you cards for some of the hardworking volunteers who give so much of themselves to our BUMC community.



We'd love to invite BUMC families to join in one special part of this project! We're collecting new, small stuffed animals (about Beanie Baby size) to tuck into the gift bags for children served by Nehemiah Mission. It's a chance to give a little friend to a child we'll probably never meet, but who will know that someone was thinking of them this Christmas.

If you'd like to participate, simply bring a new stuffed animal to the Parlor and drop it in the bin on the countertop by December 7 and we'll take it from there, packaging the gifts on the 14th. A small gift can bring a big smile!

Thank you for helping our kids share the joy of Christmas with others! *Do Something Sunday will not meet on December 20 or 27.*



GRATITUDE AND BIG DREAMS

As 2026 draws to a close, thank you.

Your generosity has already ushered us into a season of Big Dreams with God! Through the end of October, giving to our General Fund was up about 15% over the same point last year, and we are on pace to finish 2026 ahead of 2025. Those who pledged have been remarkably faithful, and some of you have given beyond what you promised. Every one of those gifts became something real: youth packing meals for hungry neighbors, new small groups forming, a warm and welcoming building every Sunday.

And as we embark on our Big Dream Vision adventures in the coming year, we greatly rely on your 2027 pledge.

We build next year's budget around the commitments you make. Your pledge (of any size) tells us what we can count on, so we can plan ministry wisely. It helps us care for our staff, keep our doors open, and say yes to the new things God keeps placing in front of us. The sooner commitments come in, the sooner we can shape a budget that matches both your generosity and our vision.

If you give faithfully but have never pledged, maybe this is your year to try it. Even a small pledge helps us plan. And if life changes during the year, just let us know and we'll adjust it together.

You can fill out a commitment card or pledge online through Realm at BUMCLinks.com. Your General Fund pledge supports the everyday work of ministry, and it's separate from any Vision Campaign gift. Both are so appreciated.

WITH DEEP GRATITUDE
Shannon Kantorowski, Finance Manager
Shannon@BrecksvilleUMC.com
440-526-8938

YOUR YEAR END GIVING CHECKLIST

- ***Mailing a check***? It counts for 2026 if it's postmarked by December 31.
- ***Giving online?*** Gifts made by December 31 count for 2026.
- ***Giving from your IRA?*** If you're 70½ or older, a Qualified Charitable Distribution can go straight to BUMC and count toward your required minimum distribution. Ask your IRA custodian to send it early, since processing can take a few weeks, and give us a heads-up. These checks often arrive without your name on them. Learn more at BrecksvilleUMC.com/qualified-charitable-distribution.
- ***Giving stock or other assets?*** Contact me first so your gift arrives before year-end and is credited to you.
- ***Wondering where your 2026 pledge stands?*** Log in to Realm or call the office.
- ***Giving statements*** will be mailed in January to those who have donated $250 or more in 2026.
- ***Ready for 2027?*** A recurring online gift takes just a few minutes to set up! BUMCLinks.com

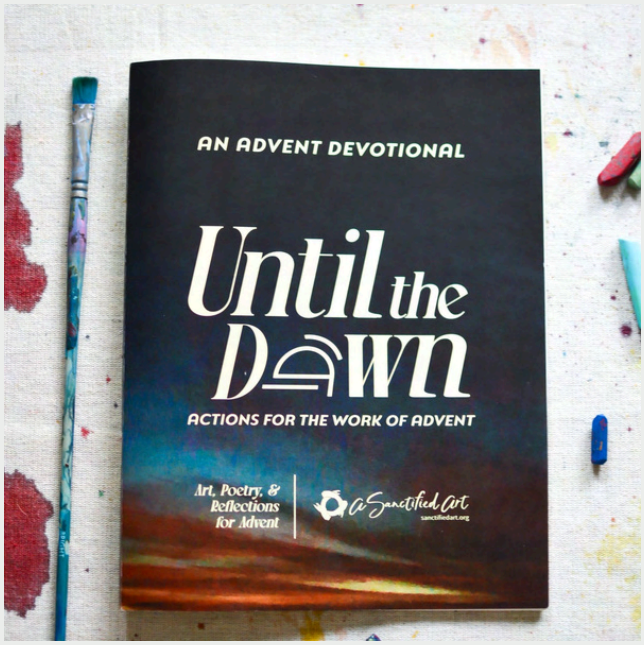
Love & Chocolate FESTIVAL

BRECKSVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Saturday, Feb. 6, 2027

Vow Renewal Ceremony, Kids' Activities
Chocolate Demos, Chocolate to Purchase,
Silent Auction,
Cakes, Baskets

BrecksvilleUMC.com/Chocolate



Art, poems, hymns, commentary, and reflection prompts to read at your own pace throughout the season of Advent and Christmas, concluding with Epiphany. Pick up a copy at church or request a printed or digital copy by email: hello@Brecksvilleumc.com

2026 POINSETTIA FUNDRAISER FOR HUNGER

Help beautify the sanctuary for worship and help feed the hungry with a poinsettia dedication! Return this form to the office by Sunday, December 13. Dedications will be included in the bulletins on Cantata Sunday (12/20) and Christmas Eve (12/24). Suggested donation $10 per dedication.

Your Name: _____ Phone or Email: _____

How would you like your poinsettia dedication to read? Limit 180 characters. Some examples:

- *Given by George & Mary Bailey in honor of Clarence Odbody.*
- *In memory of Susan Wells with love from Buddy and Jovie.*
- *Given to the glory of God by The McAllister Family.*

☐ Payment Enclosed.

☐ I paid online or will bring my payment to the office.
https://onrealm.org/BrecksvilleMethodist/give/Poinsettias

Prefer to order online?
Scan the QR Code or visit BUMCLinks.com

☐ I would like to help deliver poinsettias after Christmas. Please contact me.

☐ I understand that a poinsettia is not guaranteed, but would like one after 12/24. Please contact me.

Youth News

Project Feed was a success! In November, 13 students and 7 adults headed to Kent UMC to join youth from churches across Ohio for Project Feed. Picture our kids in hairnets, packing meals for hungry neighbors and having an absolute blast doing it. THANK YOU to our drivers and to everyone who came!

WWJD at Home. Youth group has been asking an old question with fresh eyes: What would Jesus do? First we look at what Jesus actually taught. Then start thinking about what does living it out look like *now*? This Advent, we invite the whole church family to practice alongside them. Try one of these– and if you'd like to sport a WWJD bracelet while you do (and help me make them cool again!) let me know!

- **See the *person* first.** The Good Samaritan didn't stop to ask whether the hurting man deserved help. He just helped. Live mercy-forward. (Luke 10:25-37)
- **Find some quiet.** Jesus often slipped away by himself to pray. In the rush of December, carve out a few minutes to be still and listen for God's voice and presence. (Matthew 14:23)
- **Be quick to listen.** Jesus's own brother wrote, "be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry." Holiday gatherings are the perfect place to practice! (James 1:19)
- **Move toward the hard-to-love.** Forgive someone. Pray for someone you'd rather not deal with. (Matthew 5:44)
- **Ask a teenager.** Ask one of our youth what they've been learning. They have plenty to share.

Confirmation: What a privilege to journey and welcome these kids! Confirmation has been evolving this year, and I'm excited about where it's headed. This year's class is journeying through the great stories of the Bible, from Creation to Moses to the Parables of Jesus. The kids will encounter the story itself, and then look at it through both historical lenses, and the lenses of Jesus's love and our Methodist way of thinking, and wrestle with the hard questions it raises. Our goal is a faith grounded in love, confident enough to read Scripture for themselves, and strong enough to hold up in the real world they live in. *Thank you to our wonderful teachers, George Gee, Michael Kubek, Janine Telischak, and Kathy Louttit, and to every mentor walking alongside a student.*

Will you pray for our Confirmands by name this Advent? Griffin Alexander · Gavin Bendlak · Preston Christensen · Camden Christensen - Nora Cooper · Edison Davis · Matthew Gardner · Savannah Jacob · Kaden Juniper · Grant Kardos · Zachary Kardos · Mia Noggle · Lorelei Shankland · Roe Welch - Harper Seeley. And if you see one of them on a Sunday morning, tell them you're praying for them. It's a tremendous gift to know you are loved and thought of!

-Shannon Kantorowski, Director of Youth Ministry
Youth@BrecksvilleUMC.com

Greater Cleveland Congregations

Making a Difference for our Community

In a recent sermon, Pastor Heidi talked about the difference between hoping something happens and having a vision to make it happen.

Greater Cleveland Congregations (GCC) had vision of a better response to mental health and substance use crises so that instead of ending up in emergency rooms or jail cells, neighbors could receive the care they need.

But, they didn't just hope it would happen. They organized a ten-year effort of demonstrating the need to local officials, working with other stakeholders, showing up at meetings, and not giving up.

GCC's vision is becoming a reality with the opening of the Glick Recovery Campus, which is Cuyahoga County's first behavioral health crisis center, offering 24/7 services including walk-in crisis stabilization, detoxification, inpatient care, and outpatient treatment.

The Center opened its doors in September and in recent weeks, final County funding was approved which has been combined with other public and private funding sources. None of this would have happened without the long-term collective advocacy of GCC's 39 member institutions.

While we weren't involved at the beginning, last year BUMC became part of Greater Cleveland Congregations because we believe by working together we can move from hope to vision to reality. This is one more way we can help create connection and belonging on the Square and everywhere. *-Jim Slagle*



Holiday Giving Trees

This holiday season, we are featuring three ways to support local neighbors in need from now through Christmas Eve. Let's collect essential items for families and individuals this winter:

- **Canned Food & Supply Tree:** Help us pack the shelves of our wooden tree from trunk to star with non-perishable foods (canned vegetables, fruits, soups, beans, tuna, peanut butter, pasta, cereal) and household cleaning supplies (dish soap, laundry detergent, all-purpose cleaners, wipes, sponges, paper towels).
- **Angel Tree:** Choose an ornament from the tree with a specific need written on it, and shop to fulfill that wish for a neighbor in need.
- **Hat & Mitten Tree:** Decorate the branches with warm winter gear, including new hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and socks.

Bring your donations to the tree display in Fellowship Hall and they will be delivered to local partners during winter break. Thank you for helping us share warmth, dignity, and practical care with our Cleveland neighbors this Christmas!

Sew 4 Good Christmas Bazaar

Sundays, 12/6 and 12/13 from 9:30 am - 11:30

Unique and handmade Christmas Gifts will be available in the church lobby! Our special group of sewists has been busy in their workshop and your purchase will help the Sew4Good team buy fabric and notions for projects for others in the new year! You'll find items like book pillows, bowl cozy, ChapStick holders, corn hole bags (4 per set), clothespin holders, clothing protectors with pockets, clothing protectors, dog scarfs, gift bags, hair scrunchies, hats, keychains, pillows, pillowcases, shopping totes, walker bags and zipper pouches.



Green Team:

Holiday Light & Extension Cord Recycling – Lights for Lions

Bring your broken lights and extension cords to the Green Team collection bin in the Parlor between Sunday, November 22 and January 10, and the BUMC Green Team will deliver them to the Cleveland Zoo! Last year, we diverted a whole pick up truck full from the landfill. Can we top it this year? The cords will be recycled and money earned from that will support big cat conservation in East Africa. You'll be caring for God's creation in more ways than one!

Sharing Hope This Christmas:

Support this United Methodist community in Liberia

This Christmas season, our special annual offering will directly support Camphor Mission Liberia, a ministry transforming lives through education and sustainable agriculture.

Your donations will fund the mission's daily operations, its agricultural programs that nourish the community and support the mission's operations, and the Camphor Mission school—ensuring local children have access to quality education. This mission is especially close to our hearts. In 2027, one of our own congregation members, Janet Kleckner, will travel there as part of a United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) team to work alongside the local community. Prayerfully consider giving to this project using the pew envelopes, or by noting "Christmas Offering" on your check or online gift. Keep our UMVIM team in your prayers as they prepare to share Christ's love in action!

The Mission & Community Engagement Team

welcomes you to get involved with Determined Service!

Reach out to team lead, Marla Knight, for more details. Missions@BrecksvilleUMC.com



Grateful hearts, hopeful future

Kathy Louttit, Leadership Board Chair

As Thanksgiving approaches, I find myself counting my blessings. I have a truly grateful heart, and my wonderful church family is a big part of that. We've just concluded another successful pumpkin patch. So many pulled together to make it happen. The enthusiasm for our community is energizing, and the support we receive in return is a joy. Folks count on it now—they plan to buy their pumpkins from the church on the square. They enjoy their time with us, the beautiful setup, and all the little extras that grow each year, thanks to you! Some have even joined us on Sundays.

We've also launched our Vision Campaign and are receiving your generous commitments. It was a long time coming, and we are thrilled by your support and the opportunities ahead. If you haven't made your commitment yet, there is still time! And… by the time you read this, we will have a new roof on our building! Careful stewardship of our properties remains vital to our ministry and vision. Best of all, we welcomed 14 new members and baptized 5 people on Sunday, November 15—now that fuels my hope.

Hope also means planning well for our future, the purpose of the Leadership Board's annual retreat on Saturday, November 14. We spent the day discussing church health, focusing on a theme, and preparing for the upcoming year. Having used the Simplified, Accountable Structure (SAS) for 3 years, we also reviewed our governing model. Rev. Dr. Kimberly Arbaugh, Executive Director of the Urban Mission in Steubenville, Ohio, facilitated our discussion, reminding us that under SAS, the Leadership Board is a single committee replacing the Trustees, Finance, Staff-Parish Relations Committees, and Church Council. This nimble structure requires fewer long-term volunteers and helps us focus on next steps in ministry, relying on Ministry Teams to carry out the work. Some teams include short-term sub-groups for specific events (e.g., Fall Kick Off), which are ideal if you hesitate to make a long-term commitment—we would love to have you! Transparency and accountability across all governance levels remain key tenets. At BUMC, we continue growing into SAS, having increased Ministry Team participation this year with plans to build on that momentum. Overall, it was a productive day to review SAS and reaffirm our responsibilities to BUMC.

Finally, it's time to turn to the hope of Advent, our preparations, and the many wonderful ways we celebrate Jesus' birth! May this season fill your heart with gratitude and your home with hope.



Celebrating the 2026 Brecksville Pumpkin Patch!

What a joyful, record-breaking month on the church lawn! From September 27 through October 31, the 2026 Brecksville Pumpkin Patch brought our community together in ways that went far beyond selling pumpkins. Some highlights:

$9,507.08 Raised for BUMC: Our best year yet! We sold $22,159.50 in pumpkins, plus over $1,000 from co-lead Matt Gabor's beautiful handmade hats.

280 Volunteer Hours: Church members, neighbors, and local students from Key Clubs, Lacrosse, and Cross Country teams unloaded **2,155+** pumpkins and kept the patch welcoming all month long.

Community & Memories: Under co-lead Kim Vann's guidance, the patch became a "warm fuzzy" in town—hosting daily visits from Horizons preschoolers, a diverse Family Fun Fest crowd, sanctuary tours, baby and senior photos, wedding pictures, and visits from the Mayor! Online friends even joined us in person to cover shifts and visit on Sundays.

Nothing Wasted: On November 1, volunteers cleared the yard and shared the remaining 300 pumpkins with local farmers, bakers, college students, a refugee farming project, and the Lions Club (who delivered mini-pumpkins to local assisted living residents).

Thank you to Kim Vann, Matt Gabor, our student athletes, community partners, and every volunteer and visitor who made the 2026 Pumpkin Patch a shining light in Brecksville!

Christmas Eve Hospitality

Four services: 10:30 am and 3, 5, and 8 pm

Hospitality is a Christian spiritual practice, and there are *plenty* of opportunities to practice on Christmas Eve! Can you share some of your time or talent by serving on the welcome team, passing out candles, tidying up the pews after a service, refreshing refreshments, or serving on the tech team? We need you!

- Serve on the welcome relay team. Greet guests in the parking lot, guide them to the stairs, show them where to hang their coats - the little gestures that show we care.
- Pass out bulletins and candles. A great opportunity for kids to serve alongside their grownups!
- Not an extrovert? Consider helping clean up after a service and create a welcoming space for the next service.
- Lights, camera, action! Serving in the tech booth ensures everyone can enjoy the worship experience. We'll show you how!

Want to learn more about these opportunities? Have an idea of another way you'd like to help? Email Hello@BrecksvilleUMC.com or stop by the Welcome Stand on Sunday.

Small Groups: Room to Gather

The Christmas story begins with a family who found no room at the inn. This Advent, and into the new year, we invite you to make some room: room in your week for real friendship, honest conversation, and growing with God and one another.

New Small Group in January: Wild Life with Emily Danford
Starting Sunday, January 10, Emily Danford is launching Wild Life, a brand-new small group that meets Sunday mornings at 9 am in Room 303, while little ones play in the Wiggle Room. Bring your coffee and your questions. Whether you're brand new to BUMC or have been here for decades, there's a seat waiting for you, and we'd love to have you there from the very first gathering.

Find Your Seat

Our small groups are always open, you're always welcome! Pick the one that fits your week:

- Sundays, 9 am: Wild Life led by Emily Danford, Room 303. New! Starts January 17. Childcare available in the Wiggle Room
- Sundays, 5:30 pm: led by Tina Mihalek, Room 201*
- Wednesdays, 10 am: led by Julie Evonna, on Zoom
- Wednesdays, 7 pm: Zero Line Men's Group with Dru Siley, Chapel
- Thursdays, 7 pm: led by Becky Bendlak, Youth Room

**Please note: Tina's Sunday group meets at 5:30 pm, not 7:00 pm as printed in our small group brochure. I'm sorry for the mix-up!*

Sign up at BUMCLinks.com, or reach out and I'll help you find your fit. The first step might feel like a stretch. Take it anyway. You may be amazed at what grows when you step out in faith.

-Shannon Kantorowski, Small Group Coordinator
Shannon@BrecksvilleUMC.com · 440-526-8938



The Brecksville UMC Tradition Continues

Chef Rasul will be cooking up a festive buffet dinner in Fellowship Hall at 6 pm Christmas Eve.
Bring a dessert to share or a suggested donation of $5. (If it's not in your budget, don't worry! We got you!)
RSVP at BUMCLinks.com

A Winter Sound Bath

Friday, December 11 at 7 pm in Fellowship Hall

As the days grow shorter and the Christmas season begins to pick up speed, give yourself a little space to slow down. Join us for a winter sound bath. Through the gentle sounds and vibrations of singing bowls and other instruments, we'll create space for rest, reflection, and a little quiet. Come as you are, settle in, and give yourself permission to simply be. No experience necessary, just a willingness to pause and receive. Bring a yoga mat, pillow, and blanket to make yourself comfortable. I hope you'll join us for this peaceful winter evening! - *Jenny Gee*



Caregiver Burnout and The Holidays

"I feel like I've been tumbling around in an industrial-sized clothes dryer for two years and someone suddenly turned off the power," I explained to my husband. Just three weeks after my mother-in-law passed away, my Dad died. After a long season of care-giving while working full time, the juggling is over, the balls have dropped, and I don't quite know what to do.

It's disorienting. The adrenaline needed to move from one care-giving task to the next was keeping me upright and on task. Suddenly, I'm aware of how depleted I have been. Does anyone else feel like they need a three month nap?

If you're currently spinning in that dryer or sitting in the dizzy aftermath, wondering why you don't have the energy to put up a Christmas tree or bake cookies, I'm using this space to remind us both that this is a season to practice ***ruthless grace*** with ourselves.

We can...

- Say "no" to the invitation without explanation.
- Let Christmas be simpler this year.
- Say "yes" to help. Let our friends love us.
- Give ourselves permission to be still (without fixing, producing, or helping) and be held by God.

One of Dad's favorite sayings was "Don't sweat the small stuff, and it's all small stuff!" I've never been very good at that. But our last months together were a reminder that this earthly life, both beautiful and bewildering, is best when it's simple. Sometimes the most satisfying meal is a large order of french fries and a steaming cup of coffee with friends at McDonald's. - *Submitted by Melanie Smith*

Need someone to sit with you in this season? Whether you're spinning in the dryer or sitting in the quiet aftermath, our Congregational Care Team is here to help carry the load. Reach out to Norla Lamonte at Care@BrecksvilleUMC.com.

United Women in Faith
faith
action
sisterhood

UWF Christmas Luncheon

Thurs., December 3 at noon
in the Parlor
Celebrate the season with friends old and new!

All are welcome for an afternoon of joyful gathering and good food! Bring a dish to share and come enjoy some holiday cheer with us! The Parlor will be full of friends and laughter. Come connect with others in the spirit of the season.

Chapter votes to disaffiliate

By a vote of 14 to 5, The Brecksville United Women in Faith voted to disband from the national UWF organization after this program year. Future plans to be announced. Thank you to everyone who supported UWF.

CHRISTMAS SONGS

Pick up a copy of the 2026 Christmas Carol Song Book* at church or download a copy to print at home!

*Complete with Dad Jokes!





Reach out with a prayer and a note, call or text each week this month!

Week of December 6
Ronnie Rajkovich
Celebrating a Birthday, the first without Nick
8492 Timber Trl
Brecksville, OH 44141-1773

Week of December 13
Donald & Ruth Moorhead
Celebrating Birthdays this Month
2456 W Boston Rd
Broadview Hts, OH 44147-3263

Week of December 20
Elinor Rowan
Wish her a Merry Christmas!
7005 Stadium Dr Apt 213
Brecksville, OH 44141-1895

Week of December 27
Sylvia Fowler
Celebrating a Birthday this Week
9251 Highland Dr
Brecksville, OH 44141-2605

Nominate someone who could use a reminder that they are loved and kept in prayer!
Email ***Prayer@brecksvilleumc.com***

December BIRTHDAYS

1 Allen McCrodden
1 Rebecca Burgstahler
2 Sue Ellenberger
2 Jack Burrows
3 Ronnie Rajkovich
4 Ed Crist
4 Zachery Momchilov
5 Diane Ellis
5 Kate Krause
5 Carter Barnum
5 Danny Bendlak
6 Bruce McCrodden
6 Mike Memmer
6 Katie Pasek
9 Dick Gordon
9 Rita Brown
10 Larry Girod
10 David Schroedel
10 Scott Schneider
10 Zane Burgstahler
10 Jordan Welch
11 Barb Berry
11 Amy Piorkowski
11 Greg Urso
11 Collin Mulhall
12 Penny Burns
12 Renuka Malenie
12 Steve Piorkowski
12 Doug Ritterbusch
12 Abigail Bendlak
12 Mitchell Bell
13 Kiira Olszko
13 Trinity Crouch
14 Shirley Harper
15 Ruth Moorhead
15 Sydney Hazelton
16 Dale Meyer
16 Everly Donathan
17 Elinor Rowan
17 John Jatsek
18 Carol Wilson
18 Mae Smith
19 J. Donald Moorhead
19 Jeff Fesler
19 Nathan (Nate) Petznick
20 Hudson Schneider
21 Megan Louttit
22 Brian Pickering
23 Amanda Bianchi
23 Emily Wallace
23 Theodore Samblanet
24 Pam Papp
25 Logan Hricko
28 David Brown
29 Sylvia Fowler
29 Christine Drescher
30 Mary Lou Bennett
30 Darell Fisher
30 Todd Fowler
31 John Scott
31 Hadley Spencer

**If you would like to be added to - or to opt out of - the monthly birthday list, please email melanie@brecksvilleumc.com*



Brecksville UMC is a thriving community of faith because of people like you! We thank God for each of you every day, and pause in this space to say a public thanks for just a few of you for the many ways you help saturate our community with connection and belonging. During our recent roof work, Alan Scheufler and Ric Lesinski served as our on site liasons between the roofing company and the church, hanging out and ensuring that the church property was being cared for and the work was being completed as promised. Thank you both for your generosity of time! Kim Vann and Matt Gabor lead the Pumpkin Patch Team again this year and deserve all of the orange hearts and kudos we can muster. Doug Geib is a new member of the Finance Team and we are so thankful for his expertise, support and alacrity. Marla Knight & Becky Bendlak served as drivers for Project Feed - chauferring teens is a special gift. Jeremy is new to proprety care, so we particularly appreciate the help and support of everyone who helped with Fall Clean up this year. Kim Vann still had energy to share (somehow! how?) after all of that pumpkin patch work and she and Matt, Braxton and Sophia helped ensure that Hanging of the Greens was joyful work. The church looks beautiful and our hearts are full! Thank you, one and all, for all of the ways you serve!

2026 NOVEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December

JANUARY 2027

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 ***Poinsettia Dedications support our hungry neighbors.*** Who will you honor this year?		**1** 10 Worship Tm 10:30 Staff Mtg 2 Food Rescue 2:30 Communion Svc at Chippewa Place	**2** 7 Breakfast 10 Zoom Grp 7 Zero Line **7 Advent Dinner Church**	**3** 6:30 Choir 7 Small Group 8:30 Band 12 UWF Christmas Potluck Luncheon	**4** 6 Staff Christmas Party 	**5** Noon: Memorial Luncheon for Nancy Kroenke
6 **8:30 Worship** 9:30 Classes Sew4Good Bazaar **10:30 Worship** 5:30 Small Group	**7** 10:30 Imaginative Prayer at Chippewa Place 7 Vision Campaign Mtg *Reports to Leadership Board due today!*	**8** 9:15 Finance Team 10 Worship Tm 10:30 Staff Mtg 2 Food Rescue	**9** 7 Breakfast 10 Sm Grp 7 Zero Line LAST DAY *January Newsletter Deadline! Early, for Christmas.*	**10** 9:30 Asbury Bremeth 6:30 Choir 7 Small Group 7:30Leadership Bd 8:30 Band	**11**  7 Sound Bath	**12** 
13 **8:30 Worship** 9:30 Classes&Coffee Sew4Good Bazaar **10:30 Worship** 5:30 Youth Group Christmas Party 5:30 Small Group	**14** 10:30 Imag. Prayer 7:30 Leadership Board Meeting	**15** 10 Stitch'n'Time 10 Worship Tm 10:30 Staff Mtg 2 Mission Food 5-8 Sew4Good	**16** 7 Breakfast 10 Zoom Grp 7 Zero Line	**17** 10:15 Newsletter Production Party 6:30 Choir 7 Small Group 8:30 Band	**18** *Horizon's Preschool Christmas Break Begins!* 	**19** 9 Final Cantata Rehearsal
20 Cantata Sunday 9:30 Christmas Extravaganza **10:30 Cantata Sunday** 5:30 Youth Group 5:30 Small Group	**21** 10:30 Imaginative Prayer **7 Longest Night Service**	**22** 10 Worship Tm 10:30 Staff Mtg 2 Mission Food	**23** 7 Breakfast 10 Zoom Grp	**24** *Christmas Eve* Worship at 10:30 am 3 pm, 5 pm 8 pm 	**25** MERRY CHRISTMAS 	**26**
27 **One worship service today** ***10:30 Worship Contemplative Worship returns next Sunday.***	**28** 1:30 Genesis Book Study (Zoom) *Church Office CLOSED TODAY*	**29** *Church Office CLOSED TODAY*	**30**	**31** **Holiday Hours:** **Church Office Open 9 - 12** 		

Find calendar updates at www.BrecksvilleUMC.com/calendar

BRECKSVILLE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
65 PUBLIC SQUARE
BRECKSVILLE, OH 44141



Non-Profit
US Postage
Paid
Cleveland, OH
Permit No.
928

Church Office Hours

Sunday 9 - 1 pm
Monday - Thursday 9 to 3 pm
440-526-8938
Hello@brecksvilleumc.com



Creating safe spaces to grow with God and one another.

Electronic Service Requested

December 2026

Advent Dinner Church, Wednesday December 2

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Christmas Extravaganza and Cantata Sunday, December 20

~

Longest Night Service
Monday, December 21

~

Christmas Eve Services
10:30 am - Joyful Morning Carols & Candles
3 pm - Traditional Service with Organ
5 pm - Christmas Pageant with Worship Band
8 pm - Carols & Candlelight
with Chancel Choir & String Quartet

Open Doors.

Welcoming all of God's children.

Brecksville United Methodist Church is called to the ministry of reconciliation. We embrace diversity as a gift. We celebrate our human family's diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, faith history, economic status, marital status, physical and mental ability, and education. We affirm that all people are created in the image of God and as beloved children of God, all are worthy of God's love and grace. We welcome the full inclusion of all people in the life and ministries of Brecksville United Methodist Church as we journey toward reconciliation through Christ.